

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 3-4 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Repella in view of Butler et al and Tadic et al.

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Lee for the consideration given applicant's attorney at the interview of July 14, 2004. At the interview, agreement was reached with respect to claim 3 that the present invention as defined in claim 3 patentably distinguished over the references of record and those applied in combination in the Office Action.

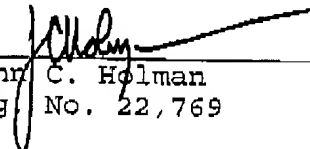
Specifically, the Butler et al patent teaches away from the use of the claimed concave shaped grooves and convex shaped ribs made of a single material with the remainder of the sealing lip by reference to column 5, lines 1 through 4 where it is stated "the boundary 42 is believed to include the hydrodynamic effect achieved by the seal 10 without the use of grooves or other hydrodynamic aids". Therefore, as discussed and agreed at the interview, the prior art teaches away from the claimed use of a single material in the sealing lip having a harder helical portion on only a frustoconical air-side surface which also includes concave shaped grooved and convex shaped ribs. Therefore, claims 3 and 4 should be in condition for allowance, subject to an updated search.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN, PLLC

By: 
John C. Holman
Reg. No. 22,769

400 Seventh Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
(202) 638-6666

Date: July 19, 2004
JLS/dmt